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Letter from J[ohn] Strentzel to John Muir, 1879 [Feb] 2.

John Strentzel

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(February?)
Alhambra, ~~August~~ 2, 1879.

Friend Muir:

Since you left us, I too have had my share of "the blues" of the deepest dye, my mind running upon last wills and testaments, but after a patient trial of the hygienic agency of calorie with liberal doses of oat brose for sustenance, the overburdened lungs have resumed their normal action, so far as their abnormal state will permit. How I might have fared if left down in the midst of that smoky conglomeration of dwelling boxes with its facilities of drug-shops and doctors is quite another thing. So I say a poor place you are in for concocting snaps and cookies from mountain meal and Sequoia sugar. Nothing short of some square miles of kitchen with unlimited brose gardens can keep up your culinary genius in perfection, but as your apprenticeship can not yet be broken, next best, your bodily demand shall be confronted with a box of spicy "Newtowns."

We are exceedingly glad to hear of your little Helen's (Swett) recovery, as so many precious flowers have recently cruelly been removed from the reach of loving friends.

Our Alhambra hills look yet ashy, nearly every morning a white mantle covers the mightiness of the Valley, but the efforts of sunshine begin to get recognized and if that long wished for rain comes down, by the end of the month the heights will be covered with gladness, with confidence of a new round of life, so I hope you will not fail to come over and study nature under the aspect of resurrection from the glacial cover unto the budding spirit of Life.

All are well and remember you kindly.

Truly yours,

J. Strentzel.